

Vaughn Thomas' Testimony  
The Judiciary Committee  
IN FAVOR of HB 7389

AN ACT CONCERNING CONFIDENTIALITY IN THE CASE OF A DISCRETIONARY  
TRANSFER OF A JUVENILE'S CASE TO THE REGULAR CRIMINAL DOCKET AND  
IMPLEMENTING THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE JUVENILE JUSTICE POLICY AND  
OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE.

March 25, 2019

Good afternoon Senator Winfield, Representative Stafstrom and the members of the judiciary committee. My name is Vaughn Thomas and I'm from Bridgeport, Ct.

I am in favor of HB7389 because youth under 18 do not deserve to be subject to adult-like confinement when their brains aren't even fully developed enough to understand the crime they have committed. At 17 or younger you are still a child, prison is no place for children. Incarcerating them in adult prison can not only mentally hurt the children but there's a likely possibility it can make the problem worse. When I was 17 I was charged for a crime, I was in juvenile court but before I knew it, the prosecutor asked for my case to be moved to adult court and I was sitting in a cell at Manson Youth Institution.

When I woke up there was a slot in the middle of my steel door. When the c.o unlocked the slot and opened it he handed me two hard boiled eggs, gritts, and a piece of toast. It was at that moment I knew I would never be a "kid" again. That's a lot for a 17 year old child to mentally handle. You go from being a kid to being treated, charged, and confined like an adult. This can actually cause an even bigger problem before it causes a solution. Prison is no place for children. Thank you to the Judiciary committee for reading my testimony today.